Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1422 with a release date of Friday, November 12, 2004 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. The FCC turns off the ham radio licensing computer and a big Aurora opening hits North America. Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1422 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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WITH THE FCC: HAM RADIO LICENSING STOPS AND STARTS DUE TO COMPUTER GLICH

Ham radio licensing came to a screeching halt on November 5th. This after a software glitch caused the computer that issues licenses to do some very strange things. Mark Abramovich, NT3V, has been following the developments from Philadelphia and gas more:

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The FCC isn't offering any official comment on exactly what happened. But Amateur Radio Newsline has learned that the problems with the Universal Licensing System computer started after an Oct. 28 software upgrade installed by a government contractor.

The problems that followed prompted the FCC to order a five-day shutdown of the system which issues Amateur Radio licenses. The system came back on-line on Nov. 10. However, as of our deadline for this week's program, the FCC still planned a weekend shutdown of the U-L-S for maintenance and expected it to return to operation on Nov. 15.

The American Radio Relay League's Volunteer Examiner Coordinator Bart Jahnke, W9JJ, tells Amateur Radio Newsline he was among the first to detect problems while doing a routine check up on the application of a friend near the end of last month.

Jahnke says he discovered the application was - as he describes it - flagged or marked pending by the
FCC for a review by a live person. He says the automated system and its software are set up for minimal human intervention. Jahnke says such a classification immediately raised concerns that something had

gone wrong.

Jahnke tells me once he called his contact at the FCC to report the problem, he was told the computer contractor would be notified to investigate.

A couple days later, Jahnke says he was told the problem was fixed. But, as Jahnke tells me, he checked and found that the computer problem had gotten worse. He says he and other VECs were finding the U-L-S had begun issuing Group D call signs - the 2 X 3 ones - to new licensees out of sequence. He says only the first and third call-district applications somehow escaped getting caught up in the problem.

At that point, Jahnke tells Amateur Radio Newsline he and other VECs called the FCC. He says the commission told the contractor to pull the plug on the system on Nov. 5, run some diagnostics and fix it. A message posted on the FCC's website on Nov. 5 said simply: "The granting of Amateur applications has been temporarily suspended. We apologize for the inconvenience."

Prospective hams who had passed VE exams earlier and were awaiting their call sign were getting nervous. Some who received the out-of-sequence call signs were wondering whether the call signs were OK to use. A few had even received a second call sign, cancelling the first. In all, Jahnke says about 130 licensees were affected and thousands of license applications were backed up in the system.

By Nov. 10, Jahnke says the FCC began issuing letters cancelling the out-of-sequence call signs and awarding the proper call signs to new licensees. For some, he says it was their third call sign in a matter of days.

Jahnke says the FCC deserves credit for responding as fast as it did. He also has praise for the other VECs across the country who were in touch the with FCC, too. Jahnke says he's crossing his fingers and hoping the planned weekend maintenance of the FCC U-L-S computer, won't undo the system fix.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Mark Abramowicz, NT3V, in Philadelphia.

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More on this situation in future Amateur Radio Newsline reports. (ARNewsline(tm), NT3V with input from FCC and ARRL)

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UNEXPECTED VHF DX: THE BIG AURORA OPENING OF NOVEMBER 7

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N6ZE: "The aurora was very bright most of the time and the magnetic bearing from the airplane extended from 300 degress through about 060 or 070. We saw this for about 3 hours and a distance of probably 1900 statute miles."

That's Pete Heins, N6ZE, describing last Sunday night and early Monday's magnificent Aurora from his vantage point in the right seat of a Boeing 757 jetliner. Pete was the co-pilot that night, flying from Los Angeles to New York's J-F-K International airport.

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N6ZE: "At no time was the visability obscured by clouds, and for about the last 1 hour of the flight we did have about a 1/4 moon in the Eastern sky climbing, and we were still able to see the AU."

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And while Pete was making his way across country, hams on the ground were sitting on 6 meters, 2 meters and all the bands above. And some like Dave Bernhardt, N7DB, in Boring, Oregon were hearing and working stations all over the place. Dave primarily operated 2 meters where according to the V-H-F reflector he worked W7IUV, K7XC, K7GS, WA6KLK and VE7DXG to name only a few. And Dave was not alone.

On the other side of the country, Jeff Klein, K1TEO, in Trumbull, Connecticut reports making Aurora propagation contacts on 2 Meters as far south as Alabama and Tennessee. To the west Jeff worked stations in Missouri, Iowa and Minnesota.

According to reports from NASA, the Auroral opening was caused by a Coronal Mass Ejection or C-M-E on the Sun. That event happened late on Friday, November 5th with the ionized particles reaching our Earth late on Sunday. Television news programs on Monday night showed pictures of this very bright Aurora as far South as Minnesota and northern Kansas.

On Tuesday the 9th two more solar shocks have arrived. Paul Kelly, N1BUG, in Milo, New Hampshire reported them on the VHF Reflector. The first hit just after 09:00 UTC but did not contain favorable magnetic field vectors or strength to produce Aurora at North American mid-latitudes. The second, arriving near 18:20 U-T-C did produce the classic Aurora buzzing. He later describe this event comig just in time for the natural late afternoon peak for auroral backscatter. He says that the Aurora came up fast and suddenly 2 meters filled with strong buzzing signals. He says over the reflector that he worked as far South as grid square E M 66.

And while hams who only operate the high frequency bands were complaining that 80 through 10 meter propagation had literally disappeared, those like N1BUG, N7DB and K1TEO on 6 meters, 2 meters and above were calling C-Q Aurora and making lots of contacts. All that is except Pete Heins, N6ZE, who landed his big silver bird at New York's J-F-K airport just as the sun was coming up. Then again, you have to admit that sitting at 37,000 feet on the flight deck of a 757, Pete probably had the best view of all. (ARNewsline(tm), N6ZE, VHF Reflector)

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MORE ON PROPAGATION: WWW.HFRADIO.ORG/PROPAGATION

By the way, Dick Mannheimer, K6LAE, who was one of the first to alert us to the Aurora also passes along information on an excellent propagation website. Its in cyberspace at www.hfradio.org/propagation.html

The site is operated by Thomas Hood, NW7US. If the name and call sign sound familiar its because this is the same Thomas Hood who writes propagation columns for CQ, CQ VHF, Popular Communications and Monitoring Times magazines.

We have looked at the site. It's well worth bookmarking on your web browser. Again the URL is www.hfradio.org/propagation.html (K6LAE)

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Break 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the W3BN repeater serving Reading, Pennsylvania.

(5 sec pause here)

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HELPING HAMS: UNITED WAY REPORTS HUGE HAM RADIO RESPONSE TO ARRL HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE

The United Way in Martin County, Florida, reports "a huge response" by the Amateur Radio community. This, to the ARRL's call to support a toy drive on behalf of the agency's "White Doves Holiday Project."

According to the ARRL Letter, Carol Hodnett, who directs the United Way of Martin County's Volunteer and Community Resource Center says League members from Maine to California have sent toys or money, and more is arriving every day. The League hopes to provide toys for youngsters left homeless or displaced by a string of hurricanes that hit the region earlier this year.

There is still time for you to take part in this very worthwhile project. All you need do is to purchase an unwrapped toy for a boy or girl aged 1 to 14. Please send it prior to Thanksgiving, Thursday, November 25th. Be sure to include a QSL card or 3x5 card displaying your call sign. Mail it to Ham Radio, The United Way White Dove Project, 50 Kindred St, Suite 207, Stuart, FL 34994.

In our view this is Amateur Radio at its very best. Hams helping kids in a true time of need. (ARRL)

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ENFORCEMENT: ARE YOU THIS PERSON?

An FCC license holder who is likely a ham is being asked by the agency if he is the same person convicted of a number of criminal acts. And the agency has an important reason for asking. Spokesman Daryl Duckworth, NN0W, explains:

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Duckworth: "Regarding qualifications to remain a licensee, in inquiry concerning criminal convictions for theft by deception and theft by failure to make required disposition of funds as the result of an

investment scam went to a licensee in Johnstown, Pennsylvania."

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According to the FCC release, the person involved is also under investigation by Pennsylvania Administrative Office of the Courts for a possible indecent assault. This is alleged to have been committed on July 30th, 2002.

The purpose of the probe is to determine if the person contacted is the same one as in the alleged and proven criminal cases. For that reason the FCC has withheld the persons identity or any other factual material to indicate whom he or she might be.

But if its the right person, he or she was given two options by the agency. The person can provide additional information on the convictions and charges for consideration by the Commission. Alternately, he or she can voluntarily submit a license for cancellation in order to avoid a hearing on the issue. (FCC, RAIN)

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ENFOECEMENT: YOU CAN'T SELL THAT BEACON

Still with enforcement news, word that ACR Electronics, Inc. of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, has been fined $75,000. This, for marketing a personal location beacon to the general public that had not been approved by the Commission.

Now here's the ironic part? The CGC Communicator reports that some of the material submitted to the FCC by ACR helped make the case against the company.

It's all on line at http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-253871A1.doc and http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-04-259A1.doc (CGC)

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ENFORCEMENT: POWER - LESS POWER CAPTAIN

An unlicensed broadcaster's response to an FCC Notice of Violation has helped to clinch a $10,000 fine issued against him. Amateur

Radio Newsline's Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, has the details.

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Well, the details really speak for themselves and we would be hard put to say it better than David Michael Oaks. Oaks is the one who received the $10,000 fine for allegedly operating an FM station at his residence in Beaverton, Oregon. This, without the benefit oof holding a valid license to do so.

Quoting from the FCC report and order affirming the fine, the agency says that in responding, Oaks did not deny the charge. Rather, he stated that he was attempting to correct the violation by lowering the power each time he received a notice that he was operating an unlicensed station.

But that's not all. The FCC goes on to say that Oaks asserted that the investigating agent told him that the effective range for a transmitter operating pursuant to Part 15 of the Rules is about 100 feet. Also, that if Oaks chose to do so, he could purchase a Part 15 certified wireless microphone to compare the range of that signal with that of his station.

Oaks did not choose to do so. Nor did he refrain from operating after receiving several written warnings. Based on all of this evidence, the FCC says that the $10,000 fine will stand.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, in Los Angeles

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More on this case is on line at http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-04-3504A1.doc (FCC)

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RESCUE RADIO: PROPOSED RADIO JAMMING SYSTEM DROPPED FOR THE MOMENT

Some good news and some bad about an emergency information system proposed by Alert Devices International Corporation. The company has requested that the FCC to dismiss its Petition for Rule Making to create an Emergency Vehicle Signaling Service. This is the previously described service that would allow emergency vehicles to

jam out authorized broadcast stations and replace them with emergency warning messages designed to attract the attention of affected motorists.

The good news is that the FCC has granted A-D-I's dismissal request. The bad news is that ADI - according to its latest filing - proposes to submit an "expanded version" of its Petition in the near future. Its all on the web at http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-04-3521A1.doc (CGC)

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MORE POWER CAPTAIN: ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY CHASTISED FOR 2003 BLACKOUT

Those wonderful people that are now bringing you BPL have bigger problems to worry about. This after Federal regulators issue a scathing review of the electricity industry's voluntary efforts to make their power grids more reliable.

The report comes about a year after nation's worst blackout that hit on August 14th of 2003. According to staff at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, power industry audits play down shortcomings of the grid system, rely on ambiguous standards that often are ignored and reflect vast differences between the best and the worst performers.

But the agency's chairman Pat Wood did say that there have been improvements since the blackout that was caused by power line problems in Ohio and affected eight states from Michigan to New York as well as parts of Canada. (Published reports)

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IN PRINT: ALL ABOUT TONE

And with more and more repeaters implementing some form of tone access, it is C-Q Magazine that's taking the lead in explaining how it works to the ham community. In his three page article in the November issue, writer Dave Ingram, K4TWJ, "How It Works" column traces the use of tone access and explains why it can be far more of a friend to hams than a way to keep them off a system they may want to try. You can read what Dave has to say in the November C-Q on newsstands right now. More information is on the web at www.cq-amateur.radio.com (CQ)

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ON THE WEB: QRZ.COM NEEDS YOU

The giant Q-R-Zed dot com website says it needs some volunteers to help it better serve the needs of the world wide ham radio community. According to its owner Fred Lloyd, AA7BQ, the popularity has resulted in a need to enlist a few more volunteers to help out on the website operations.

Lloyd says that Q-R-Zed currently has openings for two types of volunteers,. These are board Moderators and Callsign Database Administrators. An explanation of the responsibilities of each is on line at the Q-R-Zed site. Its in cyberspace at www.qrz.com. (qrz.com)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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CHANGING OF THE GUARD: SHIRLEY WILKERSON JR. W4TBU S.K.

Some sad news to report. Word that Elmer Extraordinary, Shirley Wilkerson, Jr., W4TBU, died on Monday, November 8th. As reported last week, Wilkerson was 84 years old and had been hospitalized in declining health.

According to Tom Webb, W4YOK, Wilkerson was licensed in 1950 and was a one-time member of QCWA with his story featured in the winter 2003 edition of the Q-C-W-A Journal. He is survived by a sister.   (W4YOK)

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TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECURETY: PASSCODE FROM AMERICA ONLINE

Turning to the high tech page, America Online says that it will begin offering members a security device and service that has been used to safeguard business computer networks. This after parent company Time Warner Inc. announces that its AOL unit has signed a deal with Internet security company RSA Security Inc., to launch its new AOL PassCode.

Using an ever changing algorithm, the system is designed to add an additional layer of protection to member accounts. PassCode users will be provided with a small handheld six-digit numeric code key which refresh on the device every 60 seconds. To log onto an AOL account equipped with the service, users will have to type in the six-digits in addition to their regular password.

The price of the code-key device will be $9.95. Service costs will range from $1.95 to $4.95 per month. This, in addition to the usual America Online subscription fee. (AOL, published reports)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: FALSING CALLER ID

The Washington Post reports that a new technology can trick U.S. caller-ID services into displaying someone else's name and telephone number. The Web-based systems make the name and number appear in a call recipient's caller-ID box.

A company called Star38 that launched in September with plans to market to debt collectors has changed its strategy after consumers complained. Star38 admitted the approach was "flawed," and now says it will market their system to law enforcement agencies.

New Jersey-based Camophone says it will perform the service on a call-by-call basis for a fee of $5 and up. The company said it recognizes that the service could be abused but insists its intent is to help customers protect their privacy.

But consumers worry that the technology could be used by stalkers and debt-collection agencies, some consumers worry. The Direct Marketing Association said masking a marketer's identity is illegal under rules enforced by the Federal Trade Commission and the Federal Communications Commission. (Washington Post)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: AO-51 E-MAIL REQUEST BOX

AMSAT North America has announced the establishment of an E-mail address for AO-51 users to submit requests and ideas for Experimenters Wednesday operations. AMSAT says that this is a chance for the ham community that uses AO-51 to request the modes that they are interested in* seeing operated on during the weekly Wednesday times. All input will be noted but do not expect a reply to your E-mail. Send your requests or ideas to ao51-modes@amsat.org (AMSAT-NA)

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WORLDBEAT: VE3PU NEW TREASURER OF RAC

Back here on mother Earth, word from Radio Amateurs of Canada that Ken Pulfer, VE3PU has been appointed to the position of Treasurer. Pulfer will complete the unexpired term of Eric Ferguson VE3CR who recently resigned.

This is not Pulfer's first time in the job. He has served as R-A-C Treasurer in the past, and brings a wealth of experience to the position. (RAC)

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WORLDBEAT - UK: FINAL G5RV LOGBOOK RETRIEVED FROM EBAY

Meantime, word from the United Kingdom that the final log book of one of the worlds best-known radio amateurs has been saved for posterity. This, after it was put up for auction on eBay.

The late Louis Varney, G5RV, of G5RV antenna fame was one of the founding members of the Chelmsford Amateur Radio Society in 1936. So when Chelmsford club member Duncan Munro, M0KGK spotted that G5RV's last ever logbook was being auctioned, the club decided to buy it.

Munro did the bidding. Despite fierce competition he managed to secure the logbook in the last eight seconds of auction.

The logbook shows that G5RV's final QSO's took place on the 11th January 2000 and were , appropriately enough recorded on page 73 of the logbook. The stations contacted were Ron Glover, G0WGP, in West

Sussix and club President Harry Heap, G5HF, in Chelmsford. Louis was, of course, using his famed G5RV antenna for all of the contacts. (GB2RS)

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DX

In D-X, word that W-6-S-J, will be on the air from the Bahamas as C6AWS from November 26th through December 2nd. Activity will include a Single-Op/All-Band/Low-Power entry in the CQ World Wide DX CW Contest. During non-contest periods, he will concentrate on the WARC bands. QSL to his home call. (OPDX)

And Look for 7Q7LA back on the air from Malawi in a few weeks. This, as G0IAS, updates the OPDX that he is hand carrying some ham gear for Ron to be sure that it arrives safe and sound. G0IAS will leave the U-K on the 28th of this month and is expected to arrive at the Lakeshore on the 30th. The confirmation route for 7Q7LA remains direct to G0IAS. There is no QSL bureau in Malawi. (OPDX)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: UK HAMS ON THE AIR WITH EXPANDED 40 METER PRIVELEGES

And finally this week, hams in the U-K have taken to the airwaves with their recently expanded privileges. RSGB Newsreader Jeramy Boot, G4NJH, is where it all took place:

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UK radio amateurs gained access to new frequencies between 7.1 and 7.2MHz from 31st October.
After dark, the band between 7.1 and 7.2MHz is still full of powerful broadcast stations, although some clear frequencies can be found.

The band became available on the second day of the CQ World Wide DX Phone Contest. Many UK stations took advantage of the new band by making contest QSOs with stations in the USA on their own frequency, instead of having to work 'split' as had been the case when contacting North America on 40 metres SSB.

During the daytime, numerous UK stations are now able to have virtually interference-free inter-G contacts above 7.1mhz.

The new band is available to radio amateurs on a Secondary, non-interference, basis until 2009. After the end of March 2009, the broadcast stations should move to other frequencies and 7.1 to 7.2MHz will then become an amateur Primary band.

Jeremy Boot, G4NJH, in Nottingham.

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Amateurs in the Republic of Ireland were also granted access to 7.1 to 7.2 MHz towards the end of October, joining those in Croatia, Norway and San Marino who already had access to these frequencies. Hams in Switzerland will also gain access to 7.1 to 7.2MHz from 1st January 2005. (GB2RS)
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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB and Australia's W-I-A News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Norm Seeley, KI7UP, saying 73 and we thank you for listening." Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) is Copyright 2004. All rights reserved.